

FOR THE GOOD OF THE CLUB THE COMMITTEE MUST THINK AGAIN

The Reserves should not have been axed



BILL HAYTER
Club secretary

HOW CAN Wycombe Wanderers hope to operate successfully with a pool of 16 players for next season? I put this question with all sincerity to Wanderers' management committee.

The very thought of a senior amateur club like Wanderers operating without a reserve side is hard to swallow. Of course, the club rightly claim it is a vast expense, nowadays, operating a reserve side but I, honestly, fail to see the rational reasoning in axing the second string altogether.

Wanderers are not the first team to decide to withdraw from the Isthmian League reserve section—and no doubt they will not be the last.

My main bone of contention is how will younger players be encouraged to join the club? Of the established players none are getting younger and it is to the future which Wycombe must look.

After all, ask any successful manager of the Football League what contributes to a winning side and he will answer "A good youth policy".

Matt Busby at Old Trafford, Harry Potts at Turf Moor, Harry Catterick at Goodison Park and countless others have moulded their teams round a thorough youth policy.

I mourned the passing of Wycombe Wanderers 'A' team

and this decision to axe the reserves could, in the long term, be suicidal.

Surely the obvious answer would have been to keep the reserves together in a smaller league, i.e. the Hellenic or Wycombe Combination. If the players in the reserves did not take a liking to this grade of soccer then they must move on.

No club, in whatever sphere, can hope to succeed without

reserves. The examples are already there to be learnt from. Bromley, Tooting, Maidstone and St. Albans all operate without a reserves eleven.

Admittedly, St. Albans enjoyed a successful F.A. Cup run this season but in regards to League competition they have not set the table alight.

The potential in there all right—but with the heavier grounds come injuries and the

drain on the playing strength becomes a little too much to cope with.

Wanderers should have followed the example of Oxford City and put their reserve team in the Hellenic League.

Not only would the travelling be reduced but there would be several attractive 'derby' games in the fixture list during the season.

Of the leading six clubs in

the Isthmian League, which includes Wycombe, all run reserve teams. Surely this speaks volumes for the necessity of continuing with a second string in one form or other.

How long will a young player be content to sit on the sidelines and watch? The very essence of playing amateur football, even in these days of shamateurism, is the basic enjoyment of taking part.

You cannot tell me a promising player is going to wait around forever without competing. His appetite for the game must be met otherwise he may go stale.

Training is just not enough. Match play brings razor sharp

GEORGE JACKSON . . .
out of a job

reactions to a player's game. These can only be encouraged during a competitive 90-minute spell.

It is my earnest wish that Wanderers should succeed in the competitive business of running a football club. Everybody likes to be associated with a successful side but this decision to finish the reserves is a backward step.

The object of the Press is to observe, comment and hope the views expressed are respected. I do not expect the committee to agree with me—what I do plead is for them to re-consider their decision for the good of Wycombe Wanderers in the seventies.

